

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. - 25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) A tennis ball comprising a resilient hollow core and a ball-covering felt adhered to the hollow core, wherein

the ball-covering felt is a needlefelt having an outer surface that forms an external surface of the tennis ball and an inner surface that is adhered to the core,

said needlefelt comprising a fiber batt and a plurality of transversely extending fibers,

said transversely extending fibers extending [that extend] transversely through the [thickness of the]batt in a range of angles, including angles that are non-perpendicular with respect to the surface of the batt,

said transversely extending fibers including inwardly extending fibers extending from the outer surface and outwardly extending fibers extending from the inner surface, the inwardly extending fibers having a penetration depth greater than a penetration depth of the outwardly extending fibers,

whereby the needlecraft has a fiber density that decreases from the inner surface of the covering towards the outer surface.

27 (Cancelled)

28. (Previously Presented) A tennis ball as claimed in claim 26, wherein the needlefelt includes a scrim.

29. (Previously Presented) A tennis ball as claimed in claim 28, wherein the batt is needed to the scrim.

30.-39. (Cancelled)

40. (Previously Presented) A tennis ball as claimed in claim 26[27], wherein the batt weighs between 350 g/m² to 850 g/m².

41. (Previously Presented) A tennis ball as claimed in claim 40 wherein the batt comprises a mixture of wool and polyamide fibers.

42. (Previously Presented) A tennis ball as claimed in claim 29, wherein the scrim is a polyester or polyamide warp knit.

43. (Previously Presented) A tennis ball as claimed in claim 40, wherein the scrim has a weight of about 75 g/m².